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AUTHORITY

AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (27 Feb 70) FOR OT UT 694321

13 March 1970


SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 394th Transportation Battalion, Period Ending 31 October 1969

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 4b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

1 Incl  
as

  
ROBERT E. LYNCH  
Colonel, AGC  
Acting The Adjutant General

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 394th TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TERMINAL)  
APO San Francisco 96238

AVCA QN-TTU-S3

1 November 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Headquarters, 394th Transportation Battalion  
(Terminal) for Period Ending 31 October 1969 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R1)

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, ATTN: AVCA  
QN-GO-H APO 96238  
Commanding General, 1st Logistics Command, ATTN: AVCA GO-O,  
APO 96284  
Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,  
APO 96375  
Commanding General, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-GT,  
APO 96558

TO Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Significant Activities:

- a. During the period 1 Aug to 31 Oct the 394th Trans Bn (Tml) continued to operate in Qui Nhon, Phu Hiep and Vung Ro Bay.
- b. On 25 Aug 69 LTC John E. Sutton assumed command of the 394th Trans Bn (Tml) replacing Maj. Frederick D. White, who had been interim commander following the departure of LTC Merrill R. Owen who departed on 14 Aug 69.
- c. On 15 Sep 69 operational control of Vung Ro Bay was transferred from CO, 5th TC to CO, 394th Trans Bn (Tml). This action gave the battalion operational control of the 854th Trans Co (TS) and the 540th Trans Det (BARC) which are under the operational control of the OIC Vung Ro Outport.
- d. On 20 and 22 September 1969 the responsibility for the De Long Pier and the LST Beach respectively were transferred from the battalion to 5th Transportation Command. Key NCO's were transferred to HHC, 5th Transportation Command to insure continuity of experienced personnel.
- e. Between 1 and 14 Oct 69, the battalion reorganized its units in Qui Nhon to consolidate each mission under one unit. The unit responsibility are as follows:

- (1) Guard - 264th Trans Co: (except certain commitments filled by the 1098th Trans Co)
- (2) Port Stevedore, MHE and Gear Locker Missions - 285th Trans Co
- (3) Consolidated motor pool - HHD, 394th Trans Bn
- (4) Supervision of LN personnel assigned to Area Defense Coordinator Projects - 387th Trans Co

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f. During the reporting period the following key personnel were assigned to the battalion:

Sutton, John E.	LTC	25 Aug 69	515-14-3079	CO, 394th Trans Bn
Jones, Albert S. Jr	MAJ	12 Oct 69	197-16-9389	XO, 394th Trans Bn
Alden, Donald C.	CPT	19 Sep 69	137-28-2919	OIC, VRE Outport
Lacey, Floyd E.	CPT	15 Sep 69	408-62-8939	Chaplain, 394th TB
Richie, Marion B. Jr	CPT	12 Sep 69	198-24-9938	CO, 387th Trans Co
Hoffman, Richard S.	CPT	26 Aug 69	270-46-9452	CO, 285th Trans Co
Perry, Larry J.	CPT	8 Aug 69	512-40-0511	CO, 1098th Trans Co
Anderson, Buchanan F.	CPT	23 Aug 69	225-54-3998	CO, 854th Trans Co
Coons, Kenard L.	CW4	23 Oct 69	296-24-3551	Mnt Off, 394th TB
Williams, Frank S.	WO1	27 Jul 69	411-56-4635	S-4, 394th Trans Bn

g. During the reporting period the battalion had the following record of judicial and non judicial punishment during the period 1 August to 31 October:

Special Courts Martial - 0  
Summary Courts Martial - 5  
Company Grade Articles 15 - 52  
Field Grade Articles 15 - 26

2. Lessons Learned; Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations

a. Personnel

(1) Observations: Personnel strength has been steadily declining during the reporting period. While certain missions have been transferred from the battalion this has not offset the decline in manpower.

(2) Evaluation: Consolidation of battalion mission and resources and reorganization to conform to the new mission structure has enabled the battalion to accomplish all assigned missions.

(3) Recommendations: That further consolidation be effected as necessary if battalion personnel strength continues to decline.

b. Operations:

(1) Han Jin Convoy

(a) Observations: On 20 Aug 1969 enemy forces attacked a convoy of Han Jin Transportation Company (Korean contractor) trucks. The convoy was protected by US Military personnel riding in contractor provided pick up trucks.

(1) Eleven Korean civilian contractor drivers were wounded and one US Military was killed and three were wounded.

(2) The convoy was not stopped due to fast action on the part of the Korean driver of the first truck to be hit who

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drove his damaged vehicle off the road rather than stopping and blocking the road.

(3) Prompt relief of the convoy was due to another Korean driver leaving the ambush scene and telephoning the Han Jin Truck control point in the port area, which dispatched US Military Police and additional Han Jin gun trucks to the scene.

(b) Evaluation:

(1) Prompt action on the part of the two Korean drivers plus the heroic counter-attack by the gun trucks, which resulted in proportionately heavy casualties among the US Military gunners, in combination with the quick relief forces kept casualties to a minimum.

(2) However, lack of radios and armored gun vehicles could have resulted in much higher casualties despite the prompt and effective counterattack by friendly forces.

(3) To provide effective convoy protection, even for local shuttles, armored gun vehicles must be available. Also, effective radio communication must be on each armored vehicle so that reinforcements may be immediately called when necessary.

(c) Recommendations:

(1) That all drivers continue to be briefed on proper procedures to be taken in the event of an ambush.

(2) That the Han Jin guard platoon continue to be equipped with armored gun jeeps and gun trucks, equipped with radios. This platoon was organized immediately after the ambush.

(2) LARC - LX-60

(a) Observation:

(1) On 10 October 1969 LARC - LX - 60 of the 540th Transportation Detachment (B.LRC) breached in moderate seas south of Phu Hiep, RVN at grid coordinates CQ 295325 after its engines went out, apparently from contaminated fuel. The LARC was enroute from Vung Ro Bay Outport to Phu Hiep with a load of 750 lb bombs.

(2) Salvage operations were initiated under the direction of a team from Marine Maintenance Activity, Vietnam (MMAV), which came to Phu Hiep from HQ MMAV in Cam Ranh Bay, RVN.

(3) After making temporary repairs and extracting the LARC from

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Headquarters, 394th Trans Bn (Tml)  
for Period Ending 31 Oct 69 (RCS CSFOR-65) (R-1)

the beach it was towed away from the beach in an attempt to tow it to Vung Ro Bay. At 0310 hours, 21 October 1969 the LARC-LX-60 started taking water when the weld with which the bow ramp had been sealed broke. The LARC sank at grid coordinates CQ 337276, 12° 54.8 minutes north 109° 31.1 minutes east.

(b) Evaluation:

(1) Once LARC - LX 60 was beached sand began piling upon the LARC on all sides, effectively trapping it.

(2) The LARC's ramp dogs were cut to allow the ramps to be lowered the next day to unload the bombs. During the night the high surf caused the ramps to fall and washed out 23 pallets of 750 lb bombs, which sank in the shallow water. Eventually the 46 bombs (2 per pallet) were recovered, however this recovery delayed the salvage operation.

(3) When the LARC - LX 60 was finally repaired and the ramp sealed, it was floated off the beach and observed for an hour before a towing attempt was made. It was not brought ashore for a detailed inspection due to an unfavorable beach gradient and the impossibility of towing a powerless 99-ton LARC - LX with flat tires onto a soft sand beach. Therefore, the underside of the LARC - LX was not inspected for cracks which might have occurred when it was resting on its bottom in the sand.

(4) While being towed stern first to Vung Ro Bay the LARC - LX 60 began taking water which was kept under control by the pumps which had been placed on board. About an hour after the tow started, the ramp, which had been welded shut, broke its welds and started taking water which the pumps could not control. Therefore, as the adjacent coastline was rocky and under enemy control, the LARC - LX 60 was abandoned and it sunk in approximately 120 feet of water.

(c) Recommendations:

(1) Crews must be trained thoroughly in abandonment procedures. Protection of the LARC - LX power systems is of utmost importance in order that only minimum essential repairs will be necessary to restore the power systems which are essential to a subsequent successful salvage operation.

(2) All salvage resources must be mobilized immediately because the chances of a successful recovery operation decrease significantly with each additional day's exposure to surf, tides, and sand. All salvage equipment must be thoroughly checked to provide complete reliability.



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(3) Wherever possible, power and bilge system should be restored prior to refloating a stricken LARC - LX in order to provide mobility, bilge pumps and a supply of air for the ramp seals. If this is not possible, auxiliary power systems must be on hand.

(4) A complete assessment of hull damage should be made, if possible before moving a LARC - LX into open waters.

c. Training: none

d. Intelligence: none

e. Logistics: none

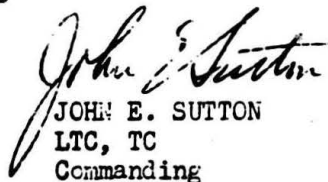
f. Organization: none

g. Other: none

3. DA Survey Information: none

1 Incl

1. Organization

  
JOHN E. SUTTON  
LTC, TC  
Commanding

AVCA QM-TTC (1 November 1969) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 394th Transportation  
Battalion (Terminal) for Period Ending 31 October 1969  
(RCS CSFOR-65) (R-1)

DA, HEADQUARTERS 5TH TRANSPORTATION COMMAND, APO 96238 1 December 1969


TO: Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Whon, ATTN:  
AVCA QM-GO-N, APO 96238

1. The Operational Report - Lessons learned submitted by Headquarters,  
394th Transportation Battalion for the quarterly period ending 31  
October 1969 is forwarded.

2. Concur with the report as written. The report is considered ade-  
quate.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: QNL 2127

  
MANUEL MIRANDA  
MAJ, ADA  
Adjutant

Cy furn:  
HQ 394th Trans Bn

AVCA QN-GO-H (1 Nov 69) 2nd Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Headquarters, 394th Transportation Battalion  
(Terminal) for Period Ending 31 October 1969 RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, APO 96238 21 DEC 1969

TO: Commanding General, 1st Logistical Command, ATTN: AVCA GO-O, APO 96384

1. The Operational Report, Lessons Learned of the 394th Transportation Battalion for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1969 has been reviewed by this headquarters and the following comments are submitted:

a. SECTION 2, paragraph a: Concur. The validity of the recommendation is clearly illustrated.

b. SECTION 2, paragraph b(1): Concur. The Han Jin guard platoon has been provided with five gun jeeps, armed with M60 machine guns, and three gun trucks (2½ ton), armed with 50 cal machine guns. The vehicles and personnel for the guard platoon were provided from within the resources of the 5th Trans Comd. The vehicles are equipped with radios and personnel are instructed to check all communications equipment prior to entering ambush sites. Both drivers and assistant drivers are briefed on convoy ambush procedures including reconnaissance by fire on likely ambush sites by lead security vehicles. Gunships are used whenever possible to escort convoys through major ambush sites.

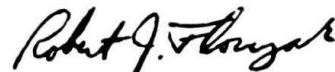
c. SECTION 2, paragraph b(2): Concur. Action by higher headquarters is required.

d. SECTION 3, DA Survey Information, was not required for this reporting period.

2. The report is considered adequate as modified by the above comments.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: QNL 2161



ROBERT J. FLORCZAK  
CPT, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

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AVCA GO-MH (1 Nov 69) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 394th Transportation Battalion for period ending 31 October 1969 MCS C3FOR-65 (12)(U)

DA, Headquarters, 1st Logistical Command, APO 96384 8 JAN 1970

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DSP  
APO 96375

1. The Operational Report - Lessons Learned submitted by Headquarters, 394th Transportation Battalion for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1969 is forwarded.

2. Concur with the basic report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

TEL: LBN 4839

*Monroe D. Stafford*  
C. D. STAFFORD  
1Lt, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

CF:  
USASUPCOM, QNH  
5th Trans Comd  
394th Trans Bn

AVHGC-DST (1 Nov 69) 4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Headquarters, 394th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) for Period Ending; 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 2 5

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 October 1969 from Headquarters, 394th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) and comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Reference item concerning "LARC - LX - 60", page 3, paragraph 2b(2) and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 1c; concur. The unit should publish internal procedures on the abandonment and salvage of LARC 60's. Additionally, this item should be forwarded to the US Army Transportation School, Ft Eustis, Virginia so that the lessons learned may be included in the instructional material published for operation and maintenance of the LARC 60.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

(08 11) 15  
C. E. MICHELS  
MAJ GEN

1st Lt General

Cy Furns  
394th Trans Bn  
1st Log Cnd

GPOF-DT (1 Nov 69) 5th Ind

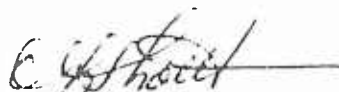
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 394th Transportation Battalion (Terminal)  
for Period Ending 31 October 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 29 JAN 70

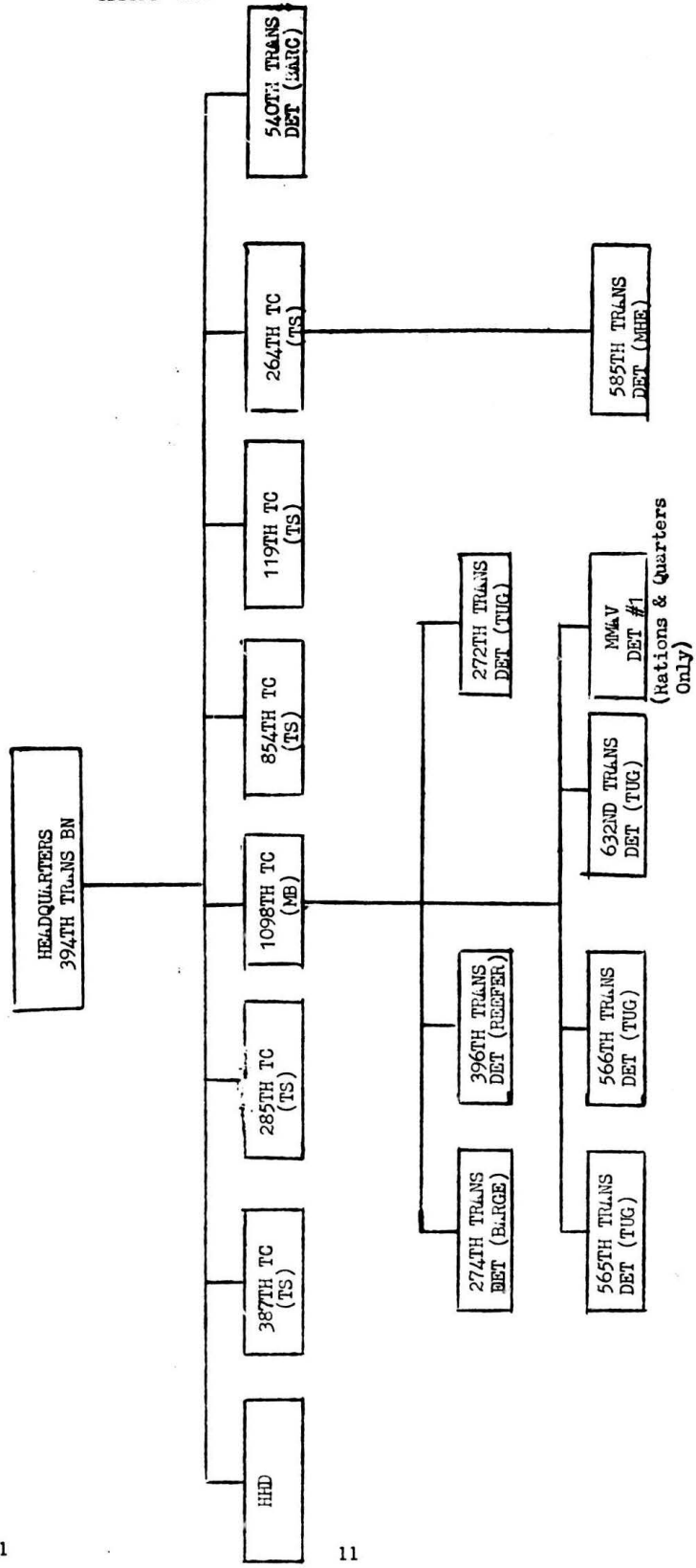
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG



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CO, 394th Transportation Battalion		
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